

NKRUMAH: THE REAL TRAGEDY

ST. CLAIR DRAKE

Mr. Drake was head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Ghana from October 1958 to February 1961. He returned to Ghana in 1965 as a visiting professor at the university's Institute of African Studies. Today, Mr. Drake is a professor of anthropology and sociology at Stanford University and chairman there of the Program in African and Afro-American Studies.

When Kwame Nkrumah, former President of the Republic of Ghana, died on April 27, he was in the sixth year of an exile imposed upon him by a military *coup d'état*. Nkrumah was out of the country when the overthrow came, en route to Hanoi for the publicly announced purpose of persuading Ho Chi Minh to open peace negotiations with President Lyndon Johnson. But Nkrumah also took with him a group of advisers on trade and finance, presumably to seek vital financial aid in Moscow and Peking that Washington was refusing to give Ghana. A high point in verbal euphoria between Ghana and the United States had occurred a month earlier, when Nkrumah dedicated the Volta River dam and praised the United States for the \$160 million it lent in 1961 for the publicly owned hydroelectric project and the aluminum smelter owned by Kaiser and associates. Then Nkrumah took off to visit the East, since the United States Government had made clear that criticisms expressed in his recent book, *Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, and what Americans called his irresponsible extravagance, had put an end to his hope of getting aid in raising \$300 million desperately needed for payments on short-term loans. But Ghana's policy of "positive nonalignment" did not concede that an approach to the East was an act hostile to the United States.

The coup came while Nkrumah was in Peking, the United States recognizing the junta within three days and proffering immediate financial assistance. Whatever pro-Nkrumah resistance there had been evaporated quickly, and the deposed head of state accepted Sékou Touré's invitation to come to Guinea as co-President, since the Ghana-Guinea Union established in 1958 had never been dissolved. The extent of American complicity in Nkrumah's overthrow, if any, will not be assessed until State Department archives are opened several decades from now. A comment appearing in a *New York Times* obituary the day after his death was announced is, however, significant:

Mr. Nkrumah suggested that the "criminal insurrection" was the work of the imperialists, specifically the United States Central Intelligence Agency. Although neutral observers did not discount his allegation in view of increasingly warm relations with the Soviet Union and China, they also noted that Mr. Nkrumah had permitted power to go to his head and had become a despot who had alienated thousands of his once fervent supporters. (Author's italics.)

The implication is that the Americans might have moved against him, but that the success of the coup was to be explained in Ghanaian terms. A hint that power had gone to his head may be found in *Newsweek's* comment that "Typically enough he was on

his way to Hanoi to seek an African solution to the Vietnam war when, during a stopover in Peking, he learned that he had been overthrown. . . ." (Author's italics.)

The American press was jubilant when the military and police seized power in Ghana. A widely disseminated picture accompanying the news showed a statue of Nkrumah lying on the ground, presumably toppled by an irate people fed up with his arrogance and tyranny. The statue had stood in Accra since the early 1950s, a modest, life-size creation in front of the legislative assembly. The Western press had seldom mentioned it before, except in 1961, when some members of the Ga tribe expressed grievances against the government by bombing it. Two of Nkrumah's maxims were carved on its base: "Seek Ye First the Political Kingdom and All Other Things Shall Be Added Unto Thee," and: "The Liberation of Ghana Is Meaningless to Me Without the Liberation of All of Africa." The statue seemed to symbolize to journalists what they referred to as Nkrumah's "megalomania," "narcissism" and "despotism." Rumor multiplied the number and size of such monuments, allegedly erected at Nkrumah's insistence between 1960 and 1966. Psychoanalytic jargon was used to explain his acts.

In addition to a fixation on statues, existent and non-existent, Western journalists added "blasphemy" to whatever political sins they attributed to Nkrumah by distorting and misinterpreting a historical event. When Ghana adopted a new constitution in 1960 to transform the country from a British dominion with the Queen as head of state into a republic with an African President elected for five years, the legislative assembly was re-decorated in African style. The traditional staff of office carried by a chief's linguist was substituted for the British mace in ceremonies, and the role of President was invested with chiefly attributes. So, the title, "Osagyefo," was added to "President." This word means in the Akan languages "Warrior Chief Who Defeated the Enemy and Saved the Nation." *Time*, however, like other magazines and newspapers, insisted upon translating it as "Saviour" and "Redeemer," thereby giving it overtones of divinity. Insofar as the term "Redeemer" was ever associated with the title "Osagyefo" it would only have been in the sense that Southern anti-Republicans during Reconstruction called themselves "Redeemers," or Marcus Garvey spoke of the "redemption of Africa" from colonialism. Yet, in commenting on Nkrumah's death, *Time*, in addition to presenting a very unflattering photograph, captioned its article "Death of a Deity." This was echoed by other publications—thus, the San Francisco Sunday *Examiner* and *Chronicle* headed its obituary "The Redeemer Dies."

Time's "Death of a Deity" article referred to Nkrumah's "despotic ruling style," describing it as "devious, ruthless, and thoroughly effective." *The New York Times* diagnosed him as being afflicted with "galloping megalomania" and "narcissism." *Newsweek* commented that "several attempts on his life only drove him to new levels of megalomaniacal excesses." Those of us who lived and worked in Ghana between 1958 and 1965 do not recognize the charge that Nkrumah instituted "one-man rule clothed in sycophancy." The de-

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Nkrumah: Pan-Africanist fighter

By William Worthy

Not long after being restored to power in 1958, as the North African crisis in Algeria deepened, French President Charles de Gaulle offered a so-called "choice" to France's West African colonies: a place within the French Union (a euphemism for French neo-colonialism) or a total, abrupt severance of all formal ties with the "mother" country.

After long and varying periods of plunder by French imperialism, all but one colony decided they couldn't make a clean break with their dependent status. It was obvious that de Gaulle had manipulated and counted on just that reaction. Some 14 years later, most of the countries that followed his script have yet to gain true national liberation.

The one colony that picked up de Gaulle's other option was Guinea. To the surprise and fury of Paris, President Sekou Toure led his financially bankrupt people out of the French embrace. For the colonial metropolis, his decision was as intolerable (as a precedent for others) as was Fidel Castro's opting out of the U.S. empire in Latin America.

Every conceivable measure was devised to make an example of the uppity upstart from Guinea. All programs of economic aid in every field were abruptly terminated. Teachers, doctors, technicians and other experts were summoned home to France, leaving behind a trail of economic sabotage and a colonized people with almost none of the educated cadres needed to keep a society afloat. Toure acceded to "power," only to find that his treasury had been literally rifled by the departing French "civilizers" and that the free and independent country was on the verge of collapse and imminent starvation.

Solidarity in practice

Into this dire gap stepped President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, with \$20 million to tide Guinea over the immediate crisis. For a country itself only a year or so out of the grip of classic British colonialism, \$20 million was a good-sized loan that probably put a strain on Ghana's own treasury.

But it saved the day for Sekou Toure, who remained eternally grateful. Not surprisingly, it was he who invited Nkrumah to come to live in exile in Guinea after the pro-Western 1966 army coup in Ghana deposed him. Toure bestowed on him the honorary title of "co-president."

character, sections of the Western press periodically invented "rifts" between the two close friends.

Numerous assassination attempts, usually traceable to outside intervention, dotted Nkrumah's years in power. In one instance, by unintentionally arriving a few minutes late for a dedication ceremony, he avoided being killed by a time-bomb planted in a bouquet of flowers that had been given to a small child to present to him. Knowing how eagerly the West sought his ouster because of his strong anti-colonialism, Nkrumah was naive to absent himself from home and thereby to make a coup that much easier. From reports at the time, British intelligence seemed to have played the major outside role in the coup, with the CIA lending active support.

Those two closely meshed agencies may well have instigated the naive and futile Vietnam "peace mission" that Nkrumah allowed the British prime minister and other Commonwealth leaders to talk him into undertaking. As long ago as 1966, both Hanoi and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam had already made clear the basic terms on which the war could be settled and there was no role for the London-dominated British Commonwealth to play in reaching such a settlement.

Knowledge of neo-colonialism

By no means should it be implied that Kwame Nkrumah had no understanding of the devious workings of imperialism. That he knew much about his enemies is clear from his 1965 book "Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism," which he dedicated to "the freedom fighters of Africa, living and dead."

While Nkrumah was in power, his country was a home away from home for countless African exiles and liberation fighters. In the early 1960s, our own W.E.B. DuBois and his wife gave up their U.S. citizenship to move to Accra and to become highly honored citizens of Ghana. Nkrumah personally sponsored DuBois' last great scholarly undertaking (at age 90): the projected 10-year editorship of an encyclopedia of Africa. (Shortly after the 1966 coup, DuBois' widow, Shirley Graham, left Ghana.)

As Nkrumah surveyed the neo-colonial mess that much of Africa has become, he must have died with a broken heart. The West has skillfully re-established its de facto economic and political control of Africa. Kenya, after having granted nominal

political independence to numerous colonies during the 1950s and 1960s. One of the best-publicized examples, of course, was in the former Belgian Congo (now Zaire). Both in retrospect and in analysis, it is clear that Brussels had not the slightest intention of giving up its control over that colony's priceless resources. The quick, greased downfall of Congo Premier Patrice Lumumba had been plotted long before the formal lowering of the Belgian flag in June 1960 at so-called independence ceremonies.

Former UN diplomat Conor Cruise O'Brien and others have thoroughly documented the record of Belgian-British-U.S. duplicity. UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold allowed the world organization to be used in the re-enslavement of the Congo. By the autumn of 1960, when events were closing in on the trusting Lumumba—events that culminated in his foul and brutal murder in February 1961—Kwame Nkrumah, as president of Ghana, wrote to him with the classic warning: "The only colonialist or imperialist that I trust is a dead one." Believing that the UN would play a neutral role, Lumumba (to Nkrumah's dismay) had called in UN forces after a Belgian-instigated rebellion in his own army.

Had Nkrumah not died of cancer while under medical treatment in Bucharest, might he ultimately have regained power? No one can say for sure. But an official invitation to return home to Ghana after the recent overthrow of the repressive pro-Western regime amounted to a vindication of his efforts, if not of his complete administrative record, as father and first president of his country. After six years, the right wing generals of Ghana and their civilian supporters had shown they had no socio-political-economic program to meet the many problems of a new nation. The policy of reopening Ghana to unlimited western investment and exploitation had worsened the economy and the condition of the people. Discontent was massive. Corruption was everywhere. Universities were closed because the students were in active rebellion.

As with Indonesia after Sukarno's overthrow in 1965 by his army and the CIA, as with Cambodia after the military-CIA coup in 1970 that deposed Prince Sihanouk, as with all the former colonies that enjoyed a brief respite of self-respect before being re-colonized, Ghana lost a leader respected throughout Africa, whatever his shortcomings, as a true patriot. He failed to build

continued

Kwame Nkrumah dies at age of 63

CONAKRAY, Guinea, April 27 —Kwame Nkrumah, former President of Ghana, died here today, it was announced on a radio broadcast by President Sekou Toure of Guinea.

Nkrumah, 63, was believed to have died of cancer. He had lived in Guinea since he was ousted in 1966 by a military coup widely understood to have been engineered by British and U.S. Central Intelligence Agency operatives.

Long a leader of anti-imperialist forces in Africa, Nkrumah, a graduate of both Pennsylvania University and the London School of Economics, became the first premier of Ghana — previously

known as the Gold Coast — when it won its independence from Britain after World War II.

He served as Prime Minister until 1960 and then as president until the military putsch against him — accomplished during his absence on a state visit to China.

A prolific writer, he authored numerous books and articles. Among his works issued here by International Publishers were "Neo-Colonialism — The Last Stage of Imperialism," "Dark Day in Ghana," "Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare," "Africa Must Unite," "Class Struggle in Africa" and "Challenge of the Congo."



KWAME NKUMAH

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'The Intelligence Game'

CIA Draws Praise And Blame From Writers

By LEW SCARR
Copley News Service

Perhaps no area of our government having a direct bearing on our attitude in the cold war has been more controversial, yet less understood than our intelligence network.

It is partly that we don't know what the Central Intelligence Agency does, but if it does what we think it does, it goes against our sense of fair play and that is bad.

The popular notion is that the CIA is a law unto itself. It is believed that it freely interferes in the internal affairs of sovereign nations, and that it overthrows anti-American governments, even democratically elected ones, to install anti-Communist governments.

Some writers have capitalized on these beliefs, shadowed them with a cloak and fastened them with a dagger and written books to support them. Fortunately, most were crudely written and rudely received.

Still, many congressmen and some journalists continue to ask, why have an intelligence community at all? Mostly the questioners are those to whom "intelligence" connotes spies, saboteurs and political activists.

Those living in the intelligence community consider the question absurd. But it deserves an answer.

Any president of a large corporation, and, indeed, any chief of state, must have "intelligence" if he is to fulfill his responsibilities.

He may get it from newspapers, from briefings by his subordinates or from reports from consultants. Wherever, he must have intelligence, or he will not survive long.

Before World War II, the armed services had relied heavily upon civilian specialists in wars and, when the fighting was over, they sent the specialists home and forgot all about the need for intelligence.

Gen. George C. Marshall once described the Army's foreign intelligence as "little more than what a military attaché could learn at a dinner, more or less, over the coffee cups."

Five months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Harry Howe Ransom reports in "The Intelligence Establishment," President Roosevelt summoned Col. (late Maj. Gen.) William J. Donovan to draft a plan for a new intelligence service designed for the requirements of a global war and patterned in the main after the British.

Donovan was a successful lawyer who had won the Medal of Honor in World War I.

"He was an imaginative, aggressive man," Ransom writes, "who had traveled abroad extensively. So far as intelligence work went, he was an amateur, but in the American tradition of public service he seemed qualified to assemble what was to become the forerunner of CIA."

During World War II the closest approach to a central intelligence system was the widely publicized Office of Strategic Services — the almost legendary OSS.

It is difficult to assess the worth of OSS because its official history still remains classified. Still, it must be given credit, despite traditional detractors, for invaluable contributions to allied victory, especially in Burma and in defeating the axis in North Africa and in aiding the French resistance.

But it wasn't until 1947 that Congress created the CIA. It was fashioned after OSS and it was born during the year that cold war was declared.

Actually, Congress in setting up CIA delegated it a single function, intelligence, and nothing more. That it does much more is without question, but just what and where it does it is hard to say.

There is a theory among intelligence agents, the good ones, that there should "almost always" be no failures. It is better, so the theory goes, to leave a problem unsolved than to risk failure or discovery.

Still, there have been failures: the Bay of Pigs, the U2 incident.

Taking into account CIA's policy toward supercaution, it would seem reasonable to assume that for every failure there must have been, eh, ten or more successes.

The failures have been pinned on the CIA while the successes almost never are. Not definitely.

Some have suspected the CIA of having brought on the downfall of Nkrumah in Ghana and Sukarno in Indonesia, of having installed the military junta in Greece and of having thrown Sihanouk out of Cambodia.

But these redits, if they are, do nothing more than support the notions of observers who see the CIA as a molder of temporary geography and a shaper of tentative history.

It is the same attitude which Miles Copeland III, who once worked for the State Department and the CIA, writes of in his "The Game of Nations."

"In the intelligence game, competitors seek to gain the greatest possible advantage short of going to war."

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CARL T. ROWAN

Post-Nkrumah Ghana Enters a New Phase

ACCRA, Ghana — The people of this troubled but newly hopeful little West African country think they offer a lesson to the dozens of other new nations of Africa and Asia: don't try to purchase rapid economic progress at the price of the people's liberty.

But the foreign minister of Ghana, Victor Owusu, is convinced that all the nations of Africa will learn that bitter lesson the way Ghana did — by going full circle from a liberal democracy to dictatorship to military rule and eventually back to a democratic civilian government.

Ghana's passage full-circle was tragic, classic, and rapid. When the British turned power over to Kwame Nkrumah in 1957, Ghana appeared to be a model of democracy which other countries might emulate. But, as B. J. Darocha, general secretary of the ruling Progress party, explains it, Nkrumah became a hero because of lucky timing. He confused luck with some special or supernatural quality in himself.

As he got more and more in trouble, he reacted as all despots have done and will do — he shut the people off. Almost

before Ghanaians knew it, Nkrumah had closed down newspapers that printed the slightest criticism of him.

He put political opponents in jail, some of them to die there. With the advice of the Russians, he set up a private army and a network of secret police and informers to insure his personal safety and the maintenance of his power.

With the help of the Chinese Communists, he set up secret camps to train Africans from other countries to go home and overthrow their governments, a scheme Ghana's present leaders claim was part of Nkrumah's dream of becoming emperor of Africa.

Within eight years, Nkrumah had transformed Ghana into a pro-Communist police state. In doing so he had wrecked the economy to the point that basic foods and medicines were not available to ordinary citizens.

Ghanaians are galled by blacks in the United States or the West Indies who persist in arguing that the overthrow of Nkrumah in February 1966 was engineered by the CIA and/or British intelligence. I asked Prime Minister K. A. Busia about foreign involvement. He simply recounted

what he called Nkrumah's tyranny, adding that the whole country gave its support to the military people who overthrew him.

Ghana has just dissolved the Presidential Commission, the three-man body headed by Lt. Gen. A. A. Afrifa, which has been serving as head of state, since a single civilian will soon be elected head of state. And it is a point of considerable talk here that the constituent assembly drafted a new constitution setting 40 as the minimum age of a President.

This rules out Afrifa, the main figure in Nkrumah's overthrow, for he is 36. The new constitution was clearly designed with the intention of preventing the rise of another Nkrumah.

"You cannot sacrifice personal freedom for economic development," the deputy speaker of parliament told me. "Personal security must stand first, for all else flows out of that."

In pursuit of personal security, Ghanaians have given their courts power over actions of the executive branch that seem to exceed the powers of the U.S. Supreme Court. But already Ghanaians note uneasily the angry reactions of Bus-

ia and the ruling group when the courts decide against them on important matters.

The people are also saying that constitutional safeguards are of dubious value where the government controls the radio and television stations and virtually all the newspapers.

I asked Darocha if he felt the constitution was impregnable or if it could be subverted by another would-be dictator. "The new constitution can be run over as easily as the people will permit," he said.

All Africa must be watching these days, what with Uganda apparently where Ghana was just prior to Nkrumah's overthrow, with Nigeria under military rule but looking for a return to civilian control, and a lot of other countries somewhere along that rocky circle that Ghana has just negotiated.

But Ghanaians expressed certainly that they have learned something from the past, something about the need to resist at the outset preventive detention laws and the similar tools of tyranny. And they seem happiest to have learned that a small new African country has proved durable enough to survive a fling with autocracy and near chaos.

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(GLES SITAYEV COMMENTARY)

(TEXT) CIA AGENTS ARE PREPARING A FRESH PROVOCATION IN AFRICA.

UNDER THEIR INSTRUCTIONS SOVIET AND CZECHOSLOVAK-MADE ARMS ARE
BEING SECRETLY TAKEN FROM GHANA TO U.S. MILITARY DEPOTS IN LIBERIA.

THESE ARE ARMS WHICH THE SOVIET UNION AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA SUPPLIED
TO GHANA UNTIL FEBRUARY NINETEEN SIXTYSIX 1966 AT THAT GOVERNMENT'S

REQUEST FOR USE BY THE GHANAIAN ARMY.

U.S. DIPLOMAT HAS RAISED THE CURTAIN FROM THE MYSTERY WHICH
SHROUDED THE OPERATION. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE NIGERIAN PAPER

THE WEST AFRICAN PILOT, HE LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG. SOON,

HE SAID, THESE ARMS WILL BE FOUND IN VARIOUS AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

THEREFORE, IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT SOON THE WESTERN PRESS WILL

PUBLISH INTERNATIONAL NEWS TO THE EFFECT THAT SOVIET AND CZECHOSLOVAK

ARMS HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED IN THE POSSESSION OF ISHOMBE'S MERCENARIES,
SALAZAR, SMITH'S CLIQUE, AND OTHER COLONIALISTS AND THEIR

PALS.

THE TEMPTATION IS TOO STRONG, AND THE IMPERIALISTS CANNOT WAIT TO RECHARGE THE GOOD REPUTATION OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND AT THE SAME TIME TO JUSTIFY THEIR SUPPORT TO SALAZAR, SMITH, AND VERSTER, THE ENEMIES OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE. THERE IS GOOD REASON TO SAY THAT THIS SYSTEM IS NOT RPT NOT NEWS, LIES AND SLANDER HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THE WEAPONS USED BY THE IMPERIALISTS IN THEIR STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION AND AFRICA. BUT THE PRESTIGE OF THE SOVIET UNION IS SO HIGH THAT THEY WILL AGAIN FAIL TO UNDERMINE IT BY SLANDEROUS TALES.

THE PRINCIPLE ADOPTED BY THE SOVIET UNION ON THE QUESTION OF ARMS SUPPLIES IS WELL KNOWN IN AFRICA. EACH COUNTRY STRUGGLING AGAINST COLONIALISM AND IMPERIALISM CAN ALWAYS RELY IN THIS RESPECT ON THE SOVIET UNION. IT IS WITH SOVIET WEAPONS THAT AIRCRAFT OF THE U.S. AIR PIRATES ARE BEING SHOT DOWN (PRESUMABLY

THE HELP OF OUR WEAPONS WHICH ARE NOW IN THE HANDS
OF THE PATRIOTS OF ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, AND SO-CALLED PORTUGUESE
GUINEA.

THE SOVIET UNION SUPPLIES ARMS TO CERTAIN AFRICAN COUNTRIES
WHICH ARE FIGHTING IMPERIALIST ATTACKS ON THEIR LIBERTY.

SOVIET ARMS ARE BEING USED IN AFRICA IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE
SUPPRESSION OF COLONIALISM AND IN DEFENSE OF LIBERTY AND

INDEPENDENCE. AS FOR THE ARMS SUPPLIED BY THE WESTERN POWERS,

PAGE 3 RUFBK 109R UNCLAS

THEY ARE USED TO PROLONG THE LIFE OF COLONIAL REGIMES AND TO HELP

SABOTAGE THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE AFRICAN STATES. 191700 EC/LEVCHENKO

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